1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

241/463 the person who is destroying his abode. These big trees have a money-value, and are sold to the wood-cutters and carpenters, who use the timber in their own industry. On the whole the Nupe are reluctant to cut down big trees, especially in the town, for they appreciate the shade which they give. But it happens occasionally that the owner of a barren tree, in need of money, has it cut down and sells the timber to wood-cutters or carpenters.

185/651/322 In the interest of forest-preservation the felling of certain trees has been made subject to the payment of a licence fee varying in amount from 5*s.* 6*d.* to £1 or more. This new rule involves an economic re-adjustment which the people—professional timber-workers as well as ordinary farmers—have not yet been able to achieve. The carpenters of Bida almost went on strike when the new licence was introduced, and refused to manufacture any more wooden stools and other products of their craft for fear of being unable to sell their goods for the higher price which the licence would necessitate. Another illustration is the case of [672] an old man, a carpenter, who, unaware of the new rule, had bought a barren locust-bean tree in Bida for felling, for 7*s.* 6*d.* When he was requested to pay the licence fee of 5*s.* 6*d.* he was unable to do so. His case came before the Bida Court, but in consideration of his poverty and age the court reduced the licence fee for him to 1*s.* 4*d.* It is too early yet to say what effect this licence will have on the Nupe wood-working industry: whether it will lead to a technical readjustment and a change in the kind of timber used, or to a gradual deterioration and eventual disappearance of the indigenous wood-carving technique, which is already feeling the competition of the cheaper, and infinitely uglier, products in Western style: packing-case chairs and tables, deck-chairs, and the like.[1]

[323/325/177] [1] It is to be feared that it will be this latter case with which Nupe wood-carving will meet. In other crafts these changes in material and partly style are already an accomplished fact: thus the Bida glass-workers have almost completely abandoned making their own glass, and make their bangles and beads of smelted down bottle glass of European manufacture; similarly the Nupe blacksmiths buy cheap sheet-iron at the trading stores, and no longer smelt their own iron ore.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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mined and smelted in the country. The production of native iron ore has been greatly reduced in recent years. To-day a large proportion of the crude iron is bought from the European stores—the Nupe call it *kansana*, 'dry iron', to distinguish it from the native mined *nyenkpa žiko*, 'black iron'. The competition of cheap European iron has made the upkeep of the large native foundries unprofitable; many have been abandoned and allowed to fall in disuse, and even where they are still in use only two or three out of perhaps six furnaces are still workable. But in the busy season, shortly before the rains, when everybody needs hoes and axes, the supply of European iron frequently runs out, and the resulting shortage has to be relieved by calling on the supplies of native-mined iron ore. Nupe iron-smelting can, in fact, no longer meet heavier or more regular demands, although many Nupe farmers still prefer a hoe made of native-mined iron—it is stronger, and lasts better, they say; European iron is fit only for repairs, for patching hoe-blades, &c. The tools of the blacksmiths and, above all, the anvil, are invariably made of native-mined iron.

The iron-ore miners, called *edudaciži* (meaning 'workers in the deep'), form a professional group distinct from the blacksmiths, although some of them are blacksmiths as well as iron-ore miners. The mining is done on the slopes of the low flat-topped ferriferous hills of the country. I have heard of five different mining places: near Mokwa, near Shari, near Patigi, near Kutigi, and near Pichi (about 8 miles from Bida). I have seen only two; one in work, though on a reduced scale (near Pichi), and one abandoned (near Shari). The iron-ore foundry near Pichi is the largest in existence. Like the blacksmith groups in the districts round Bida the iron-ore miners of Pichi submit to the authority of the guild-head of the blacksmiths in Bida. His authority goes so far that, five years ago, he could order two additional furnaces to be built in order to increase the Bida supply of iron ore; these new furnaces, however, are no longer in use.

The ore is scratched off the surface of the hill or dug out of shallow pits. Close to the hill-side are the furnaces in which the iron ore is smelted. Three furnaces are placed side by side under a large grass roof which protects workers and 'machinery' from sun and rain. It will be best to describe the very elaborate arrangement by means of two diagrams, the first of which represents a bird's-eye view of the furnaces, and the second a vertical section through a furnace. We have first, a large pit, 6 feet square and 6 feet deep. On one side a pot for water is let in the ground; on the other the furnace proper is erected. It consists, above ground, of a kind of chimney (*a*) made of thick clay, 5 feet high, built over the mouth of an airshaft (*b*) which serves both as ventilator and as opening for the fuel and the iron ore. On the other side of the chimney are the two bellows (*c*), clay tubes formed somewhat like horns, the wide mouth of which is covered with goatskin.. The narrow bottom ends of the bellows tubes are joined, under ground, with a long straight clay tube (*d*), a little over 5 feet long, which is fixed in position by means of wooden wedges. It opens into a cave-like space which forms an extension of the square pit. On the bottom of this space the iron ore is

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942

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FIG. 1

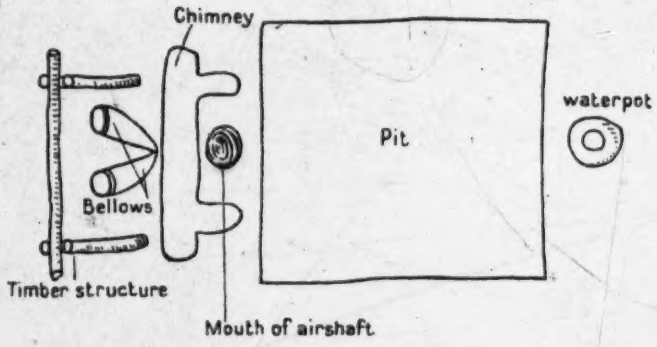
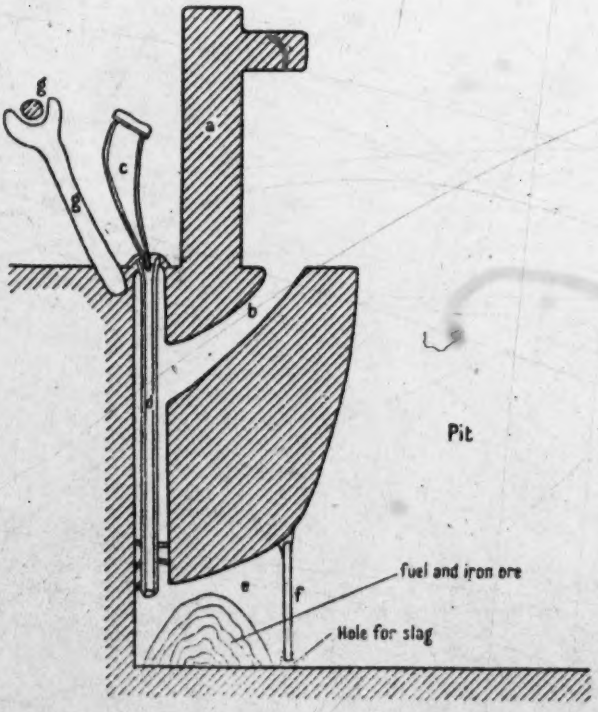


FIG. 2



[p. 262]

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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placed, with charcoal piled over it. The 'cave' (*e*) is connected, by means of a narrow airshaft, with the mouth of the chimney (*b*). Cave and square pit are separated by a semi-circular clay plate (*f*), 1½ feet high, which is cemented into the opening so that it leaves only a small triangular hole open at the bottom. Through this hole the slag pours into the pit. One worker sits on a crude wooden bench which is supported by a timber structure (*g*), behind the bellows; he is relieved every hour. Other workers, two or three in number, act as stokers, feed the furnace with fuel and iron ore, and remove the slag by means of a long wooden stick with iron points, so that the small hole in the clay plate should be kept open. The iron ore is broken into small pieces by means of stones or hammers before it is placed in the furnace. The smelted ore remains behind the clay plate until the whole process is finished; then the clay plate is broken and the iron removed. The clay plate has to be made new and fixed in position every time the furnace is put to use. With the furnace all prepared, a lump of iron of the size of a large yam fruit can be produced in five to six hours' work.

We have already seen that the organization of blacksmith work and iron-ore mining (as of all guild-organized craft-work) involves two different types of co-operation, the actual working together of the labour or *efakó*-unit, and the wider co-operation in the framework of the occupational unit, the guild itself. We will examine first the composition of the labour-unit.

The men whom we find working in the same workshop are all related and belong to the same family group or section of the family group. The common workshop does not, however, invariably establish the labour-unit; the workshop group is the wider unit, for the men who occupy the same workshop are not necessarily also co-workers in the narrow sense. The labour-unit itself corresponds to the small individual family or section of the family—a father and his sons, or a number of brothers, who divide all work among themselves and in certain respects share the proceeds. All more important work is regarded as *efakó* work, i.e. the family head buys the raw material and receives the proceeds from the work carried out by his group. Less important work, mainly small repairs of hoes or axes, is regarded as *bucá*, and the money received for it belongs to the individual worker. Only adults, however, practise *bucá* work; small boys who are yet too young to carry out serious blacksmith work are assigned the work of blowing the bellows. In workshops where there are no young boys, the adult workers may take the bellows in turn; occasionally a woman, the wife of one of the blacksmiths, may help out.

The relation between these various units, workshop group, family group, and *efakó* group, is involved and variable. It will be best to illustrate it with actual examples. The first two are taken from the largest blacksmith group in Bida, the *Dokodza* people. In one of their workshops we find two adults and two boys working together—the boys blowing the bellows. They all belong to the same family and live in the same house. The two adults are brothers, and the two boys the sons of the elder brother. The four workers form a single labour-unit, under

INDUSTRIES, CRAFTS, AND PROFESSIONS

467 Industries and crafts are practised for the most part by men in their homes or in attached workshops. Some involve co-operative group production, for which the labour unit is an *efakó*, corresponding to the *efakó* for farm work (p. 26). In most cases such work is supplemented by individual (*bucá*) work. Slave labour was formerly employed. Production is organized in guilds controlled by a guild-head, and thus considerable control is exercised, through the political system, over all the more important industries of the country.

Craft guilds control the mining and smelting of ores, iron-working, brass-working, and silver-smithing, glass making, weaving, bead-work, building, wood-work and carpentry, and butchery. Individual crafts are tailoring and embroidery, leather-work, indigo-dyeing, straw-hat making, mat and bag making, basket-work, rope and twine making. Cloth, mats, bags, rope, and twine are commonly made in many villages, though they appear for sale only in the larger markets. Free professions include barber-doctors, drummers and musicians, and dancers and singers (men and women).[21]

467 *Iron-ore workers* are called *edudacuši*. The mines are on the slopes of the low,
325 flat-topped hills and consist of shallow pits; the smelting furnaces are close by. A large proportion of the iron now used in smithing is bought in bars from European firms, but native-smelted iron is considered superior as it is said to be stronger and more durable. It is regularly used for the blacksmiths' own tools.[22]

467 *Blacksmiths* are called *tswata* or *tswata gbagba*. There are one or two work-
326 shops in every village, and three "wards" of smiths in Bida. The guild-head lives
[463] in Bida and his control extends in certain respects over the whole country. It is a "closed" craft. The forge is generally in a separate hut at some distance from the compound. There are usually three or four workers, who are related, in a unit. The work is mainly *efakó* but there is some *bucá* work, consisting mainly of repairs to hoes, etc. The main products are blades for hoes, bush knives (though these are now mostly bought from the European trading stores), large nails and hooks for building, and the small brackets used in canoe making; blacksmiths also make some of their own tools, hammers, etc. Charcoal required for the furnaces is produced at intervals in quantities by two or three men of one workshop. The early rains are the smiths' busy season.

There are a number of blacksmiths in Basa-Nge District who sell their wares in the Igala markets.[23]

Brass- and silver-smiths work almost exclusively in Bida town where the furnace is often in the entrance-hut of the compound. The materials are obtained by melting down pennies (for "copper"), rifle cartridges and rods (for brass), and silver coins. The main products are brass and copper sword-hilts, daggers, horse-trappings, bowls, jugs, trays, ladles, and receptacles; brass, aluminium, and silver bangles, rings, hair-pins, and chains; signet-rings are made by a crude *cire-perdue* method. Some work is designed specifically for European buyers. The work is largely individual, but there is a system of apprenticeship.[24]

467 *Weavers*, known as *edeluciši*, are found in three guild sections in the three parts
286 of Bida town. Most of them are Nupeized Yoruba. The looms are of the narrow horizontal treadle type producing cloth in strips 5 ins. wide, and of a standard length, approximately 10 yds. They are set up in a row in a half-open shed in the courtyard. The thread is now mostly of European manufacture, native-ginned and dyed cotton being rarely used. Members of the same household occupy a common workshop, but the work is mainly individual (*bucá*). A broad upright loom is used

[21] Nadel, 1942, pp. 257–9, 293–4, 299; Lins, 1947.
[22] Nadel, op. cit., pp. 259–60.
[23] Nadel, loc. cit.; Hopkins, 1934.
[24] Nadel, op. cit., pp. 269–74.

8: Walker G-5 (ca. 1933) 1934 FF52 Nupe FF52

530 M78i

8. Then, there are two figures which in appearance seem to be cast out of pure copper. One is 1 foot 10 inches high, and represents a man standing with clasped hands. A small pigtail adorns the head, the eyes are very bulging, and the feet very big. The other (Plate M 6) is a remarkably realistic bit of modelling, and is as noticeable for this quality as No. 4 is for its formal decorative treatment.

9. There remains one small figure (Plate M 7, 8), 1 foot 4 inches high, apparently of pure brass. It is of a male figure of ungainly proportions and coarse features, holding a crook and wearing an apron. In addition, a small cotton cloth is tied round its loins.

10. No. 4 is very heavy, due probably to the fact that the clay core is still within the figure. The others are light and hollow. All are or have at one time been on shallow rectangular bases.

[325] 11. The first thing that strikes one about the figures as a whole is the difference in the material of which they are cast. All of them appear to be made by the *cire perdue* process. But, as has been indicated above, four are of dark bronze, two appear to be of pure copper, and one of brass. Only the three last-named are kept scoured. Another striking feature is the divergence of technique. It is impossible to think that there are less than three sources for these figures, not because of the difference in metal used but on account of the wide difference in treatment—unless, of course, they are copies of originals. However this may be, the designs on Plate M 2, 3, 4 are so distinctive and conventionalized that they must have had antecedents, and it is to be hoped that this article may have given sufficient data by which their origin can be traced.

793 12. The Village Head of Tada tells the following legend. The Chief of Atagara had a son called Shode who was a successful hunter but could not find a market for his meat. At that time the chief of a certain town called Wanta had a girl in his household whom he gave to Shode to cook the meat of the animals he killed. After a time she became with child by Shode. When he was about to return to his home, he brought her a charm and a loin cloth and told her to give them to her son when he was born, for a son it would be. Shortly after he had returned home, his father, the chief of Atagara, died and he succeeded to the chiefdom. Now, in those times when a new chief was installed, each town brought slaves, and it happened that this child Edegi, which the girl bore to Shode, was amongst them on this occasion. When the chief, Shode, saw Edegi, he recognized him by the charm and loin cloth, promoted him to honour and showed him much affection. Shortly before his death he called Edegi and told him that after his death he should gather all his property together and leave the country. At this the townspeople rose up in jealousy, but Edegi escaped and travelled up the Niger with his loaded canoes till he came to the neighbourhood of Bida. There he abandoned chains because of their weight and passed on to Tafa in Bida territory, then to Tada, Gbere and Jebba, at each of which places he left either chains or ornamental figures. He got as far as Kwatashi in Bussa, and then returned or was driven back. His boat and poles were of bronze. They lie in the Ega river close to Muregi. Edegi sank himself and the boat because he could not elude his enemies. He was the first chief of the Nupé.[1]

13. The information given in this account suggested further inquiry at Gbere, 15 miles east of Jebba, opposite Rába, the only one of the above-mentioned places that is situated in Ilorin Province. Owing to the phenomenal floods it was not possible to reach the village itself, but the chains were brought to Tada for inspection. There are five of them, measuring 33 feet 6 inches, 20 feet, 23 feet, 8 feet 8 inches and 7 feet 2 inches respectively, and all are much corroded. The links vary from 3 inches to 6 inches in length and are rectangular in shape. At the end of one chain is a circular link. The weight of all the chains is about 20 lbs.

596 [681] 14. The Ndeji and the Wangwa of Gbere say that the chains were used in pre-British days for strangling criminals. Executions were carried out in the bush by the Checho assisted by three youths. The present Checho who looks after the chains has not seen an execution, but the Ndeji

[1] *Note.*—According to the Bussa legend, Edegi was chief of Gbere. He came up the river as far as Kwatashi, and encamped on the east bank of the Niger. Sarkin Wawa sent to warn him that he was not destined to become ruler of this region and if he stayed death would be his portion. It was then low water, and Edegi walked out to a large rock to receive the Wawa envoys. When he heard their message he laid a curse upon the rock that any canoe that came near it would sink and any man that touched it would die. Edegi then departed down stream, but the rock remains and is still called Dutsin Edegi.